

1966

From the psychiatric notes, January 5, 1966: Dr. Sullivan returned to the hospital from his visit. During the visit he met with his colleagues and saw the referring psychiatrist, as well as spending a good deal of time at home with his family. The patient found that he was able to deal with almost all situations with relative ease. He reported no drinking of alcoholic beverages during the entire visit . . . Is somewhat concerned about wife's ability to follow up on the recommendations of the therapist and social worker. She had denied any need for psychiatric care and the patient feels that he will have to take a good deal of time in helping her to re-evaluate the situation. Dr. Sullivan does not feel that he will have any difficulties returning home, except in relations with his wife. In this area he is somewhat depressed and verbalizes his fear of dealing directly with his wife. He, at times, attempts to place the therapist in a position between himself and his wife. On the other hand, he says he is confident in returning to his vocation, and has no concerns about his operating ability. Dr. Sullivan continues to present a rather passive picture of himself and no apparent stresses seem to bring out the obvious anger. The patient suggested returning home immediately, but the therapist asked the patient to stay on for at least another week. Dr. Sullivan accepted this in a resigned manner."

RJL, January 5, 1966: At end of the year, I assemble letters from you and Jim and prepare them for binding. Starting on yours last evening I find one which I believe you would prefer be omitted and you can guess what it is about. Re-reading it, I again marvel at your great strength!! I say no more. We have a wonderful daughter and we fervently pray that your days of trial are near end.

Undated letter from Kip, now back in California, to Dad: Got the pipe in the mail today. . . S'pose you've heard that Hershey is drafting college kids. Nothing like it for the guys in the lower half of their classes. I'm not in the lower half, I'm sure, but it'll sure irritate me if I see a couple of guys from here get drafted because they are. Being in the lower half of this college is better than a lot of schools in this country. Oh, well, I've always wanted to see the world. Time to eat. See ya, Kip.

January 11, Tuesday: According to the records from The Institute For Living, this was the day that Dad was officially discharged from the hospital.

The psychiatric notes: In dealing with his feelings, the patient tended to project all his difficulties onto his wife and was somewhat demanding in his request for privileges in his dealings with the therapist. His confused thinking was demonstrated by a rather markedly abnormal MMPI profile . . . However, during the course of therapy, the patient began to gradually come to grips with many of his difficulties. The anxiety symptoms disappeared and the patient, even under stress, did not feel any need for alcohol. He became quite

productive in the activities under the supervision of the Department of Educational Therapy, and reported feeling increased capacity for pleasurable experience, was able to relate to patients and to members of his family on visits from his wife and on his visit at home and showed evidence of being able to handle the conflicts of stresses of daily living better than he had previously. Therefore, he was discharged on January 11, 1966, after a return from a lengthy visit at home, during which he felt he was exposed to most of the stresses that would face him after discharge. He planned at that time to continue psychotherapy with the referring psychiatrist and to resume working on January 31, 1966. The patient shows a return to his premorbid personality adjustment. Final diagnosis: Passive-aggressive personality, alcoholism. Condition on discharge: Recovered. Dr. Rosenberg" • **173 days later Roger is dead in a Georgia motel room.**

RJL, January 15, Saturday: Your report on the Christmas 19 days is of course very welcome to us. We hope and pray that this condition continues, and we shall await the future, in this case, with tremendous interest. . . . We could not play the Pagan record because we had no adaptor. One of these days we shall discover one and recover a musical loss.

RJL, January 30, 1966: Last 2 hours on TV – and first 90 minutes was quite worthwhile. Congressional panel on Viet Nam. But I doubt that I arrived at any conclusion in the matter as a result of what those informed men said. I suppose that we all have some sort of prejudice in the matter. I guess that mine is “Get out of there. We got no biz there anyhow.” I also guess that this is a very unpopular opinion and I'd hate to have to support it by solid facts. I think that I know very well what your opinion is.

Myra, February 5, 1966: Roger's mother was still alive last night when I talked with him. She gets no better but still hangs on to that glimmer of life. Roger intends to stay in St. Petersburg until next week if she lives but then he must come back. Warren and Harriet are with him so he has the comfort of their presence as well as their help in settling her affairs and disposing of the house.

A letter from Kip to Myra, February 8, 1966: Just got the news from Dad in a philosophic letter on death and appreciating life. Kind of different - impressed me. . . . Have had insomnia constantly for the last 3 months. Yesterday, gave up and saw psyche at Counseling Center, respraining my ankle on way. Ankle swollen a little again. Might not be ready to dive at 1st meet with Cal Poly on 19th. Kip.

Myra, February 9, 1966: Roger's plane arrived on time last night . . . though he is tanned from your Florida sun, he is tired and worn out, after dealing with sickrooms, undertakers, lawyers, and real estate agents. He's done all he can do now and nothing was to be gained by staying in St. Pete. Although she survived a third coronary, pneumonia and 106° fever, she is hardly aware of anyone's presence and says very little, none of it sensible to anyone else. I do wish the doctors would stop fighting to save her life.

My very first diary, February 13, 1966: Time: 8 o'clock. Dad and I are here in plane (jet) 405, flight 706 on seat 5, A. Dad got two pictures of me drinking cocoa. For snack, I ate a

roll and some orange juice. Arriving in Chicago I saw a football field a baseball field and a whole ton of train cars. We leave at 10:30. We arrived in Tampa and used Avis-Rent-a-car and rode to St. Pete.

My diary, February 14, 1966: Time 5 to 11. I am writing this with grandma's pencil. Dad went to see a lawyer and I saw a bank vault, drawer of dough. I lost \$1.50's worth of film and candy. Then I saw the Bounty and went to Webb's City, the largest drug store in the world. We went to Desert Ranch and played Shuffle board and me losing 97-17.

My diary, February 15, 1966: Time: 9:15. At first we went to the bank and then went to see a sailboat race but it was called off. Then before we went to grandma's funeral I went into a graveyard and then left for the funeral. After that we went to the ocean and a nearby pool. We ate some seafood and then came home.

My diary, February 16, 1966: Time: 11:00. Today we went to the fort first and lost 50¢ fishing and a bunch of good time. [?] Then we walked along the beach and lost a crab or two. Then went and had supper. And after that we saw The Ugly Dachsund and then I got bawled out by Dad and then fainted. • By fainted, I'm sure I mean, I went to sleep, as in the next night's entry where I say I "went unconscious."

From psychiatric file on me, from a Mayo Clinic child psychiatrist Dr. Feldman, who had met with my teacher, Mr. Willis: School Visit with Principal and Teacher – Luke is described by his teacher as being troublesome in school. He does much wisecracking, constantly makes comments, and is very disruptive in class. He also is described as being "sly" and "sneaky." They feel that they need to watch him. He easily slips away, goes where he should not be – as in other classrooms – will go through things on the teacher's desks. To their knowledge he has stolen nothing at school, but he does seem to have a reputation in the neighborhood for stealing, being a bad influence, leading other kids into trouble. Both the teacher and the principal have been told by other parents that Luke is not permitted on their property, and their children are not allowed at his house. He seems to get along well with his peers at school. Is popular, but from comments he has made to the teacher it seems that he may lead a very lonely life once he leaves the school grounds. Teacher has observed that Luke is around the school quite a bit, arriving in the morning as much as a half hour early, and hanging around at the end of the day when the others have gone home. Academically he is underachieving.

My diary, February 17, 1966: Time: 9:00. Today we, or maybe just me, got up late and ate breakfast and sat around and packed grandma's things and ate lunch, and then I bought all the guys presents and bought another newt. Then I messed around with Fiddles (crab). Dad left to sign a bunch a junk. We left to eat, came home and went unconscious.

My diary, February 18, 1966: Time 1:30 AM. Today I got up had breakfast and had a rootbeer. Then we went to see my Dad's high school and saw his picture in an old year book and then at lunch at McDonald's and then went home got dressed and left for the airport. We sat on seat A & B, no. 12. We went from Tampa to Milwaukee, Madison and home and the newts lived.

Myra, February 18, 1966: Roger and Luke arrived home at 8:30 Friday night – lying in the sun at noon and -21° by 8:30 – all in the same day. They managed to have a good time despite the mournful circumstances. Luke must have behaved himself unusually well. Roger brought back the few things that had any intrinsic value.

March 2, Wednesday: This is the only date marked on Dad's Last Will and Testament. Very interesting, that he would update his will almost exactly a month out of treatment and almost exactly a month before he decided to get and stay drunk. I bequeath all automobiles, boats, sporting goods, wearing apparel, jewelry, silverware, musical instruments, books, objects of art, household furnishing and equipment, and tangible personal belongings which I own at the time of my death to my wife, Myra Sullivan, if she survives me, or if she does not survive me, to my children who survive me in equal shares. [There was an agreement that] If my wife does not survive me and no issue of mine survives me [that one half of his estate would go to his half-brother Warren Thatcher Sullivan, and the other half to Mom's brother James Rubert Longstreet.]

Chris's diary, March 9, 1966: I went to a show tonight and Dad picked us up after it. On the way home he kept telling us that he was hen-pecked. Mom made him put up the gate. Mom made him get Pagan. Mom is a child. Mom loves her books. Mom loves little pets. God that's irritating. I don't notice much change from his ways in the days of yore. Damn it.

My diary, March 19, 1966: Dad take away TV.

My diary, March 23, 1966: Blizzard. No school.

Myra's notes after reading: The usual soft pedal. Conversation with Hartford MD is astonishing to consider at this time. How could he have accepted news of DWI and assured me it “wasn't the end of the road. No need to be alarmed.”

RJL, April 2, 1966: A page from you in the morning mail, which did not carry all good news, but we persist in belief that sunny days are ahead. No comment on that as per custom.

Chris's diary, April 9, 1966: We left for LaCrosse around 10:30 in the morning. We had a fine trip up. Dan and I went to a show while the mites stayed home. Then we came home and read comics and watched television. Then we went and got supper at the Holiday Inn [where I remember Collin and I ran up and down the long balconies and stairwells in a game of tag]. Then we went bowling and Colly and Luke bawled their dumb heads off. Luke and Colly have been fighting and screaming and moaning around all the time. Dan and I are sleeping in one bed. Luke is in another and Colly is on a wooden couch . . . God Damn it. Last night dad started drinking again. He was juiced the whole night. Mom and us left the motel with him still sleeping it off. We rented a car and

come home. Things will be just like old times. [In huge letters:] Shit I know right now never to ever drink in my whole life.

Jeff, writing in October, 1991: In about April, 1966, the MG had a flat tire in the garage so Mom and Dad had left in the other car. I changed the tire after they left. Later that night Dad accused me of taking his bottle out of the trunk where it had been hidden. Thirty minutes later Dad called me into the study where he and Mom were sitting. He said 'You're exonerated.' Mom had taken the bottle before I changed the tire. Only now do I wonder if Mom deflated the tire herself to prevent another drunken MG joy ride.

Myra, April 23, 1966: [The first letter Mom had written to her parents since that last "Don't worry" letter of March 21.] The past month has been more than a little difficult and you have had to settle for an occasional post card. Although the situation here is not as I wish it were – and worse than it was in February and 1/2 of March – still it is so immeasurably better than it used to be that I ought not to complain. Nonetheless it does disturb me and busy-ness is my best defense against melancholy. So, busy I have kept myself for several weeks.” **The next letter she wrote was dated July 11, 1966. Either she didn't write at all until then, wrote only post cards which Grandpa didn't include in the bound letters, or any letters were later cut from the volume.**

RJL, May 8, 1966: We are getting anxious about you, but we know that you are too engaged to write a letter, so we attempt to be as content as possible with the occasional bits which you find time to send to us. I said “Getting anxious.” It should be “continue to be.” Some day we'll get straightened out, one hopes. . . . Ur M complains about my abbreviations; she tries, now and then, to read, and gives up at many places. Clear enuff moo tee.

Kip's diary, May 27, 1966: Call from Linda last night about us moving to Florida. Shows what a laggard I am with this fucking diary – didn't even mention Dad's calling me up to say he's resigned from Clinic. Going to Fla. in two weeks with whole family – TO STAY. Linda got sweated cuz Jeff told her I was leaving with family – I'll be damned if I'm leaving Linda in 4 days of getting home.

Kip's diary, June 2, 1966: Flight home fast. Linda come running out. But minute I got inside car, everyone hit me with bad news. Dad not resigned, more like fired. Might not go to Pomona next year. Moving out of house. Probably won't go to Florida. Shit!! Went to Linda's, stayed till 12:00, called Mom, came in MG. Jeff had accident in station wagon. Mom says Dad as bad in Palm Beach as ever. Jeff pulling A in Bio. Gonna be airline pilot.

RJL, after Myra's quick post-West Palm Beach debacle, June 3, 1966: It doesn't seem possible. Were you really here, right in D-21 32 hours this very week? I sat outside, eye on that mammoth bird which, it was alleged, you would fly to Chicago in less than two hours. But I could not see you at any of the windows. And since return to D-21, about all we can talk about is our visit with you, and we go over it again and again. The wait at the bus station, its noisy arrival, the appearance of our one and only daughter from behind the

monster – our rapid conversation as we scuttled north – the four hours or more of talk into what is called the wee hours. How did Tuesday evaporate into night, and after some sleep, the day of doom in which lay the great bird referred to above. And it was all over. At least my first visit with you since 1962. When the next? We do not know. [And then he quotes a poem by Tennyson:] “And yet we trust that good will fall/ At last far off, at last to all / And every winter change to spring.” You may know that CRS called mid-morning Wednesday [June 1st]. Your mother talked briefly with him. He thought that he was in Norfolk. We are anxious to know when he reached Rochester. I told you not to bother with letters in these perilous days. Just a post card with some statement or other that will keep us reasonably up to date. Such a communication we shall expect weekly, if at all possible. Your mother is now getting ready our simple evening meal. I paused to remark to her that you did not eat a meal with us in D-21. But you did eat a scrap out in lounge, at some time or other, as I remember. Ah, you were here so short a time! So now we will have cornflakes and a sandwich and glass of milk, after which we will look at TV and find out where the astronauts are. . . . One turns to incidental tasks, to keep mind from dwelling too much on troubles which seem without solution. We cannot avoid turning over in mind the alternatives for you. We await the turn of events in the next few weeks, as indicative of what is in store. As I have said earlier, we do not expect that you write much about this biz, but do try to send a post card once a week or so. We wrote Jim about things as they seem now to stand. Perhaps you will hear from him. But we must proceed with the commonplaces of life, and they are common enough here. Each day goes as its preceding. Half an hour before sunset you can picture me sitting in the lounge with feet up on radiator, hoping to see something interesting on or over or alongside the lake. Nothing happens. One Green heron, one Egret, one Wood Duck – a few noisy Redwings and that is it. But it is a lovely view out over the mirror of a lake and that is good for eyes – and spirit.

My diary, June 7, 1966: Jeff take flyin’ lessons. Dad drunk.”

Kip's diary, June 8, 1966: Played a lot of piano. Dad home. Dad denied drinking when I had coke bottle in hand with smell of whiskey in it. He's been drinking all week, whether in Norfolk or Mpls. Looks terrible.

Kip's diary, June 9, 1966: Dad sat around tallying bills. Can't tell whether drinking or not any more. 3:15 went with Mom to pick up Collie at school to go to psyche but poor little kid looked glum and wouldn't get in car. . . . Rode up to see house we're moving into soon as this house sold.

Kip's diary, June 10, 1966: Made sure Dad didn't listen in on couple of Mom's phone calls. Dad talked Bill Price, lawyer (on phone) then took off talk to him. Mom said Price trying to persuade him to go to alky clinic. Came back more than usually depressed. Stuck around, keep eye on him. Feeling blue, went to fair, couple rides, saw Danny smoking, Jimmy M already drunk. Place dead. Walked home.

Kip's diary, June 13, 1966: Played poker with Chris, Dan, Bug till 10. Went downstairs, see Bon & Jeff motioning me into screen porch. Jeff said Dad had just told him he's

moving to Florida with \$8,000 to start practice. Gonna take MG. Jeff and I supposed to buy another car. Sure thing. Did bunny hops when I heard."

Chris's diary, June 13, 1966: Dad got jugged tonite and was a jolly person.

Kip's diary, June 13, 1966: Dad boozed when he got home.

Jeff writing in 1991: In June, 1966, I was sitting on the screen porch cutting cards for 5 dollar bills with Hallenbeck, the drummer for The Fury's (Ellis) and another rocker from Albert Lea who had hair down to the middle of his back. Dad staggered out onto the porch with faked and polluted enthusiasm – pretending he was happy to see the group. His face was bloated. He quickly developed that sloppy round face when his boozing got heavy again. It was in the middle of the afternoon. A few minutes later he cornered me in the kitchen and hissed that he wanted that “long hair” out of the house.

Kip's diary, June 16, 1966: Dad going out “to eat” when Mr. Plunkett drove me up to gates [dropping Kip off from work at Rochester Savings & Loan]. The slobbering drunk isn't home yet and it's midnight.

Kip's diary, June 20, 1966: Dad left this morning at 10 for Virginia.

Kip's diary, June 22, 1966: Felt shitty all day. Got in at 2 last night after O.K. job with Mustangs in Iowa. Voice shot. Stomach fucked. Laid up here for awhile, downstairs, played Monopoly with Jeff and Chris, the game we made. Muggy day.

Kip's diary, June 23, 1966: HUMID! . . . Chris told me Dan was upstairs drunk, had come in at 2:00. Went up and when he turned around to look at me, god, did he look like a zombie. He was SO DRUNK! Tried to take him up here [Kip's room on third floor of Millstone], get him out of stinking room. Barfed up here. God! So out of it! Finally told Chris to take him to bike shed when I got Mom to take me to Linda's. But later called. Collie had gone in, told Mom Danny sick. Mom went down to take temperature, came back “mouth drawn” (according to Jeff). Got back 10:30, she knew said Chris. Oh well. Bought black suit and vest at Lancer's, \$33.00.

My diary, June 27, 1966: Make page in comic.

Chris's diary, June 27, 1966: Dad is jugged again. He has loused up several jobs just because he is jugged. God I hate him. He thinks so little of everyone, especially us. We thought he would be okay when he got back but he can eat shit now and not care he is so bad. HATE.

RJL, June 28, 1966: We are now residents of Room #29 River View Hotel. We left Wesley Manor 3:30 PM yesterday and here by 6:00, leaving Allied Van to complete loading our multifarious impediments. It got here this PM and you should see rooms #28 and 29, filled – my feet up on a box of books. 30 boxes of books. It will require a week to

get straightened out. I look down Indian River, and am well pleased – despite roar of traffic over bridge – occasional screech of English sparrows.

Kip's diary, June 30, 1966: Played 2 or 3 hilarious games of spit – Dad called, now going to Georgia. Oh, \$! [**Here he drew a little picture/symbol of a wad of money with wings, taking flight.**]

Myra, Late June, 1966: [**The following letter from Mom to Grandpa was dated Monday, July 11, but I print it here in order to keep the flow of event of these sad days in some order.**] Dearest Momma & Poppa – This still seems to be the best means of communication – and I see no reason for abandoning it. This time, however, I shall use only one side of the paper so that you may edit it as you think proper. I want to tell you all of it – so I'll go back to the first of June. Knowing that I have not written very often since I saw you then. Roger did not come directly home, even when he was through in Norfolk. He went to St. Paul and stayed there nearly a week – an unusual thing for him to have done since he always was home earlier than planned. There he stayed, doing nothing, calling many times a day, so intent on his own misery he never even asked about Kip, who arrived home on the 3rd of June. When he did come back, he behaved quite differently. He spent most of the day in the bedroom with the curtains drawn, sleeping most of the time because of the drugs and the liquor. He steadfastly denied drinking, even when obviously drunk or when the bottle was discovered. He was equally unable to face the reality of my decision not to go with him when he left Rochester. He knew I was seeing a lawyer, knew that a 'separate maintenance' order was about to be served on him, had had a long session with the lawyer at which time my intentions were made abundantly clear to him, yet to the very end he never believed it. Whenever he called, his conversation was always about my joining him to look for a house. Perhaps it is one of the kindnesses of nature that he didn't accept this – since he never had to act on its reality. During the short time he was home, he was generally very kind to all of us – obviously very sad and melancholy – very withdrawn – very uncertain physically as well as mentally. His eyes were the saddest – or the emptiest eyes I ever saw. As I told you on the phone, I did not really expect him to come home alive. Whenever the phone rang I was braced for bad news.

My diary, July 1, 1966: Dad call up.

JULY 2, 1966, SATURDAY

Collin, writing in 1991: What I remember of his death begins with his departure from the Rochester airport. He had bought me a Butter Finger candy bar and scraped my face with his whiskers when he kissed me good-bye. [**Colly was the last brother to see Dad alive. Kip was the last to hear his voice.**]

Chris, writing in 1991: I have a clear recollection of the last time I saw Dad. It was at The Millstone on the summer day that he left to go to Palm Beach to look for a private practice. He wore a navy suit and a white shirt. He suitcase was the brick red one with the

oval brass latches that rotated toward the handle to release. He came into the living room where Mom was sitting in the caned chair that sat in the middle of the living room facing the fireplace. She had her hair tied up in a bun and wore tight-fitting shorts with vertical stripes of earth tones, green, brown and cream. She stood to kiss him, touching his wrist as she did. Then, he picked up his suitcase and walked down the back hallway toward the main door of the house and out of my life forever.

Jeff, writing in 1991: The last time I saw CR he was leaving for the trip south from which he didn't return. It was near the end of my junior year and I had been taking flying lessons – planning to be an airline pilot. We were standing on the front sidewalk near the side door into the kitchen. I brought up my plans and he advised that airlines do not want 'a pipsqueak that flies a putt-putt.' He said I should become a Navy pilot – something I backed out of four years later when it became clear that it required barbecuing Vietnamese farmers.

Myra's July 11, 1966 letter to RJJL: His first stop was Newport News. Mark Coventry phoned later that first week to say the Newport News doctors had called him to say Roger was arriving for interviews intoxicated and irrational. A three-way effort was made by Mark, me, and the doctors in Virginia to get him to come home or go back to Hartford. But the expected result was an intensified, hysterical denunciation of all of us – Mark for following him across the country to 'give him the axe,' me for my willingness to believe everybody but him, the Newport News doctors for being s.o.b.'s he wouldn't work with anyway. So he went on to New Orleans – with much the same result: arriving full of confidence, leaving because the men there were discourteous or incompetent. During this time I was in an unremitting state of confusion and distress. The money was draining away fast – with hotel bills, transportation, and constant phone calls. I was getting too much advice – Mark saying, “You'll have to start commitment proceedings,” Dick Steinhilber saying it couldn't be done, Tony pressing me to get funds frozen, the lawyer protesting his inability to do much till Roger's return. In the midst of all this, Tony and Pat Kelly were agitating to have the Clinic put Roger on a disability basis, which resulted in my having phone calls from the Board of Governors, head of Psychiatric Dept., Clinic insurance men, and the Orthopedic section heads. Even Jimmie called me during that last week – till my head was finally spinning intolerably. Through all this was the dread certainty that doom was near. I feared he would meet with a fatal accident – or involve himself with the law since he always rented a car wherever he was. The Thursday and Friday and Saturday nights of July 1 - 3 were horrible. He phoned as many as eight times in one day – usually to berate me with all the old vituperation. I finally told him Friday night not to call again – that I'd hang up the moment I knew it was he. Those were my last words to him – a knowledge that will haunt me for a long time.

Chris, writing in 1991: I remember the Saturday night, the night before, we had stayed up late and done our normal ritual. We probably cooked a pizza and watched Laurel & Hardy on Channel 4. I remember that we watched a movie together with some brothers. I do not recall the title of the movie but I do remember two men dressed in light-colored futuristic uniforms. As I recall it was a movie that involved a submarine, Australia, a beach, and some great calamity, maybe a nuclear war. It was in black and white and was

a science fiction movie. ["On The Beach"] Mom told me later that Dad had called her late on Saturday night, she thinks within minutes or hours of his death, and baited her. He probably did not feel intimate with anyone unless he was in conflict with that person. Mom says that she was patient with him, refusing the bait, and not fighting with him. I remember Mom being angry after the late night call from Dad and how glad she was on the following morning that she had not allowed herself to be a source of pain for Dad in the last few minutes of his time on the planet.

Jeff, writing in 1991: On July 2nd, I remember Mom talking to Dad on the phone at least a couple of times. She was agitated. Seems one call was in the late afternoon and another at 9, 10, or 11pm. Rossi and I were watching TV in Dad's study. Mom had advised us not to answer the phone. I was sitting on the big chair in the corner by the secret compartment. The drum table was in front of me with the TV to the left of the drum. The phone was on the desk top to my right. At 12 or 12:30, it rang. I recall it rang 17 times. We all kept our eyes on the TV. No one said anything.

JULY 3, 1966, SUNDAY

My 1966 diary: Dad die. Uncle Jim come over.

Myra, writing in 1990: July 3, 1966. Anyway, I think it was July 3. It could have been the 4th; he was skillful at spoiling a holiday. For years I've been uncertain which day it was and haven't given enough of a damn to look it up, to verify it. There's a death certificate in a box in the storeroom, saved for some possible legal need. If I come across it again, I may throw it out this time. Certainly I made quick disposal of the first official announcement, a police report with its terse listing of cause of death. So I am not sure, as I said, if it was on July 3 or July 4 that the end came – or at least the end of his active part in the whole sordid, miserable, destructive business. Lucky him. He was done with the hurting. Seven of us, the so-called survivors, may never be. All right. I've established that it was either July 3 or July 4. Midmorning, I think. I was flat out on my bed, fighting off the dizziness of dehydration. (Minnesota was in the throes of a heat wave.)

Chris, writing in 1991: Kip retrieved me from my room on that Sunday morning. He told me that Mom wanted to see me in her room. Then he preceded me down the hallway and sat on the fireplace. I stood at the front of the bed. I even have a recollection of having my right leg up on the bed when Mom told me "Your father died last night." I do not remember if those were her exact words. But I do remember that I said "Oh, God" when she told me. She was in her nightgown and sitting up in her bed, leaning against the back railing. I had the falling sensation combined with the feeling of being punched in the solar plexus. The floor beneath me had exploded. I could see that Mom had been crying but Kip seemed undisturbed, even jaunty. I do not remember crying then, in fact now that I write those words, I remember the first moment I did cry, it was at the funeral. I am not sure than I cried then either but the horrible reality settled upon me then. Mom had chosen to inform us all separately, or at least me separately anyway. So informed, I am sure that returned to my room and went back to bed.

Dan, writing in 1992: I remember being told by Mom about Dad's demise. I was at the side of her bed and I think one other brother was with me, maybe Luke. I remember making a conscious effort to react "properly." I did an obligatory cry and then went to my room which, at the time, was the Cold Room just off the master bedroom. Instead of grief, I felt shock. Sitting in there, I could hear people talking and crying and I was moved by the magnitude of these events. But I didn't feel grief. In fact, I wondered how these events would affect my standing in the eyes of my eighth-grade peers. I had always thought it was pretty cool to come from a rich, abnormal, and dysfunctional family. Now with Dad's death, I might even get to feel Marjorie Hanson's breasts. (P.S. – I never did get to feel Marjorie Hanson's breasts.)

Collin, writing in 1991: I was in my room (over the dining room) playing with a little radio that had an alligator clip on an antenna wire. I was looking for something to clip the antenna to when someone, I think it was Kip, invited me into Mom's room. When I came in Mom was lying on the bed looking quite somber, Kip was sitting at her side, facing the fireplace. I don't recall word for word how Mom told me Dad was dead. She said something like "He's not coming back." I do remember after I was told of his death she said "Go ahead and cry." I said, "No, it's not that bad." I think I stayed for awhile before going back to my room to play with the radio.

Chris, 1991: The pain was dulled for me on that day except for one moment. That came not long after lunch. We had a lot of visitors on that day. Mom received most of them on the screen porch. At least two people were visiting when still another came. I was following these new visitors, they may have been the Bianco's. They preceded me onto the porch. Mom stood up and embraced the woman, laid her head on the woman's right shoulder so that I could see part of her face from my position at the door to the kitchen. The arrival of her friend sprung Mom's tears again. Seeing her pain released that swelling of pain in me that has been so familiar to me for as long as I can remember. I don't remember if I turned away and went outside to be alone – something that would have been characteristic of me – if I stayed with the family. Oddly, I do not remember meeting any of my brothers and seeing them with the common knowledge that something dramatic has happened and our lives are different. No sense of community or even a tighter family – pulling together – occurred for me as a result of sharing a tragedy, something I would have expected to happen.

Chris, 1991: I remember standing on the roof of the house that was being built in the orchard opposite the Hollenbeck's house. Jeff had gone to the airport to get Uncle Jimmy. I know that I could look across the valley, over the orchard and Vaughn's and across the gully and Claydon's to the county road as it intersected the Institute Road. The sun was setting when I saw the car come into view and turn up the hill. I ran toward the edge of the roof, indifferent to getting hurt, and jumped off the house, which at that point was at least one story high, maybe a story and a half. I know it was reckless at the time but I didn't care if I got hurt. Actually I was surprised when I wasn't. I was in a race. Jeff and Uncle Jimmy had to come all the way up the hill to the corner where the mailbox once stood. The post for it was there years after we had moved the box closer to our house.

Then they had to come down the private road. I ran down the driveway that ran along the edge of the orchard, and met them at the gate.

Chris, 1991: Some one had taken me to the Snyder's Drug Store at the Miracle Mile on the afternoon of July 3. I have no recollection of who went with me. I imagine that several brothers went. It must have been in the afternoon because I don't think that we went out till after Jimmy arrived. Only Kip would have let me buy what I bought. In addition to some comic books and some candy, I bought a small butane gas refill tube for cigarette lighters. I do not recall why I bought it or that anyone challenged me. Why are you buying a butane refill tank? That night, after I was in bed, I decided to open that tank up. I attacked it with a pair of scissors and some needle-nose pliers. I tore the nipple off and cut the top off. That way I could look down into the tube and see the liquid butane. It boiled at room temperature. The tank became very cold in my hand. As I watched, in about two minutes the butane boiled away. I did this in the darkness of my own room. Only the hall light lit my bed as I sat there tearing the lid off that cigarette lighter refill.

JULY 4, 1966, MONDAY

Jeff, writing in 1991: Uncle Jim, Kip and I chose the casket. I remember a close basement display area with 30 or 40 coffins. Kip and I strongly urged that we not blow money on an elaborate one. We favored the simple blue metal one. Uncle Jim said you must remember that those at the funeral might judge us as being disrespectful. This conversation occurred more than once and I think Jim was getting pissed. Eventually we settled on an oak and brass one with white satin lining (for \$2,500?). At the viewing, CR had his best blue suit on. Unfortunately, he also had on a tie that Kip and I both wanted. I remember at the time Kip and I both commented on the "great loss" associated with cremating that knitted tie.

Jeff, 1991: On July 4th, the house was very quiet. I watched fireworks from the gable window in my room. The fireworks at the Country Club could be seen out over Bamber Valley. After the show was over, I went to the other upstairs bedroom window (the one overlooking the pool, and out into the pine trees), and knelt on my bed looking out on the very dark night. I remember thinking I should cry or react somehow and I forced out some tears but couldn't find very much. I empathized with CR's loneliness. I even identified with him at that time, but the feeling was pretty shallow.

JULY 5, 1966, TUESDAY

A poem my Myra wrote sometime around 1982:

EPITAPH: A MAN OF MY IMPORTANCE

Too bad about the chambermaid
who had to open room 20 that morning
and find me on the floor

in all that slop of whiskey, blood and vomit.

You couldn't expect her to recognize
a man of my importance, dead like that
in a motel in Augusta, even though
the whiskey was the finest and the Valium
was served up in a pharmacy-size jug.

But someone ought to have known
a man of my importance shouldn't have been
sent home with blood still on his face,
vomit still stuck in his windpipe,
bundled into a returnable-for-refund
heavy-duty cardboard box.

Chris, writing in 1991: I was the only son to not go to the funeral parlor to see him be dead. I regret that decision even today. I would like to have said goodbye to him, even in death. Or perhaps I would like to have known in life that he was really gone. I think at the time I said I wanted to remember as he was, living. The pain of his leaving was great for me; I simply wasn't ready to handle it then.

Kip's 1966 diary: Around 10:30 or 11 tonight, Jim, Dan, Luke and I went to see Dad at funeral home. Looks different, like his Dad. Dan and Luke took it fine, just stood around looking at him from all sides. Mom didn't want little guys to go, but let them decide. They said they were glad they went when they came back. Jim told me how he had died – vomited (flu), evidently fell (bruise on forehead) unconscious, choked to death. Might get double indemnity on \$280,000.

Jeff, writing in 1991: CR had fallen and banged up the center of his forehead which the make-up could not fully hide. He looked pretty good otherwise. He was the first of hundreds of corpses I have seen. He is the only one I kissed. [**Brother Jeff is an M.D.**]

Historical notes: According to *Rolling Stone*, the top 45 rpm in the nation as of this week is Sinatra's *Strangers In The Night*. And the top LP is Herb Alpert's *What Now My Love?* According to a July 2nd, 1966 copy of the *Minneapolis Tribune*, some of the programs that aired on local station on this day: The Saturday morning cartoon line-up on Channel 4 starting at 7 was *Captain Kangaroo*, *Heckle & Jeckle*, *Tennessee Tuxedo*, *Mighty Mouse*, *Lassie*, *Tom And Jerry*, and *Quick Draw McGraw*. And over on Channel 5 that morning starting at 8 was *The Jetsons* (in color, they noted), *Atom Ant*, *Secret Squirrel*, *Underdog*, *Top Cat*, *Fury*, and *Roy Rogers*. The good channel to watch evening television on Saturday was 5 which was airing *Flipper* at 6:30, followed by *I Dream Of Jeanie*, and then *Get Smart*.

JULY 6, 1966, WEDNESDAY

Kip's 1966 diary: Dad's funeral at 10:00 a.m. Up at 8:30, insomnia till 2:30 last night. Jeff, Chris, Dan and I rode down in wagon behind Mom, Jim, Col and Luke in Towey's [the funeral home] car. At bottom of Institute Road, we were crying with laughter; had to hang back from lead car so they couldn't see us. Were led into Fireside Room. All of us convulsing inside. Were led into front pew, Jim, Mom, Col, Jeff, Chris, Dan, Luke, me. Chris let part of a laugh escape within a minute after sitting down (big crowd). Jeff and Dan said later were in same boat. Finally made it out. Jeff and I lit up on way out. Luke crying. Saddest part when wheeled coffin away.

Kip, writing in 1991: The most clear memories of the days after Dad's death are those of the funeral. Somehow the brothers got into a hysterical, laughing mood just before driving to the church. I'm sure Luke and Chris were the main perpetrators, but I can't recall for sure. I think all the jokes were about ridiculous events that might happen at the church. Like Col bursting into laughter when the minister appears. Those of us in the Prefect (following Mom and Uncle Jimmy, Col and Luke?) were laughing so hard by the time we were passing Bianco's we had tears running down our faces. On the county road, I slowed the car down so as to put some distance between us and the front car. I was worried about how we would behave in the church. We were so off the deep end. As we sat in the waiting room, I tried not to look at other brothers, one or two of who (Luke and Chris) were trying to get us going again. As we sat in the pew I thought I was going to bust. Someone made a slight noise by barely shifting the movable foot rest in front of all of us. I thought that was going to get us all going again. Somehow we survived. I think the first thing I did was to hustle out the door and light a cigarette. Linda Wooner or someone said she saw our shoulders convulsing and thought we were crying. Whew! Emotionally I really was hammered. I lost 25 pounds that summer.

Jeff, writing in 1991: My memory of the funeral begins when we were all together in a hallway to the left of the pews and we entered single file into the second row. Jim first, then Mom. I seem to remember sitting next to Chris. The mood seemed to be quite light. Someone, I think Chris, was monkeying with the rail that you kneel on just in front of us. It came crashing down with quite a loud sound. We all cracked up and everyone behind us saw our shoulders shaking. The joke we've all been telling since then has been that the crowd behind us thought we were sobbing. But now I doubt that. Everyone probably knew we weren't sobbing.

Collin in a 1991 letter: At his funeral I remember being very bored and fidgety. I didn't realize until very late in the service that Dad's body was in the big box at the front of the church.

Chris, writing in 1991: I do remember the funeral. I remember driving to the funeral in a separate car from Mom and, I think, Uncle Jimmy. I am not sure but I think that the company who sold us the funeral also provided transportation to and from the event. A big limousine, black, picked up Mom, Uncle Jimmy and probably Luke or Collin, Collin

anyway. I remember Jeff begging Kip to not follow the limousine so closely because he was scared Mom or Uncle Jimmy would see us laughing. We found the whole situation hysterically funny. We were all weeping with laughter, uncontrollable tears. Within a few blocks of the church – the Methodist Church on 4th Avenue – we managed to get ourselves in control. We hoped that people would see our swollen eyes as an indication that we had been crying rather than laughing. But as we pulled into the parking lot, Jeff observed that there was 'quite a turn out,' as if for a party or a celebration rather than a funeral. A renewed fury of laughter come over us all. We convened again in a small lounge. We were all dressed up in jackets and ties. There was a strong conspiratorial sense in our little group. I remember feeling separated from the crowds outside – even from Mom and Uncle Jimmy. In the car and in the lounge, I felt a common experience and orientation. I don't think that I felt so much a lack of understanding or a failure as much as an inability to feel integrated with any other community than the six of us. Here the bonds stopped. We filed into the church and sat in the front row on the right side of the aisle. I have no recollections of the funeral as presented by the church. Two events during the funeral do come back to me. Dan was sitting either to my right or one down. He put his foot up on the kneeling bar at our feet. It creaked. It seemed as if there had been no sound for whole minutes before that sound and everyone in the silent audience had been straining to hear some indication of where these six boys were emotionally. Dan announced to the whole crowd – as if with words through a bull horn – we are so indifferent to the death of this beloved ogre that I am casual at his funeral. I put my feet up as if I were watching a game of football. The footrest shrieked its creak as if it could not circulate this piece of gossip fast enough or as if to condemn the boys for their carelessness. Mostly, I think that I did not want Mom to know that we could barely keep from laughing. From the perspective of twenty five years later, I can see that the hysterical laughter was a wild release from a sustained and severely tense condition mixed with anxiety about the future and a whole lot of grief from our father's death. But at the time, laughter *was* laughter and I was scared that our laughter would be received by Mom as scoffing at her pain. But, as I wrote these words, I felt a more generalized and abstract sanction against laughing at your father's funeral rather than a concern for Mom. My immediate response to the creak was to burst out laughing. The burst I could not control. The environment did provide me with the strength to overcome the laughter. There was a surge of terror that everyone was going to lose it and we would all break out into gales of laughter. I do not remember that anyone else found the creak so disturbing. The second moment of the funeral that I remember came when I saw the casket. I hadn't been aware of it for the first half of the ritual. I had chose to not go to the viewing and the sight of the casket in its faintly humanoid dimension was the first real moment when I felt that his death was real. All of the hysterics drained out of me in that moment. I was not longer in danger of laughing. Then I felt only the loss. The moment continued at the end of the service when the pallbearers wheeled the coffin down the aisle. At the time I thought that something as important as the body of my father should not be moved. Wheeling it down the aisle like it was a tray of desserts in a restaurant struck me then as obscene. I almost thought that the church and the earth ought to be moved to bury his casket. Leave it where it was. Do not lay your hands on it. Do not move it. I remember going outside after the funeral. I wanted to be away from people. I wanted to be outside and in the sunlight. That felt freeing and healing.

Dan, writing in 1992: As time went on, to this day in 1992, the only moment of grief I felt (I think it was grief) was at the end of Dad's funeral when his coffin was wheeled down the aisle. The magnitude and finality of the event finally caught up with me. Even then, I didn't think I really felt grief as much as an awe of death, and relief at Dad's passing. As a man approaching forty, what I'm writing now may sound like I haven't worked this through. But the truth is, I never felt close to Dad. I was afraid of him. I never knew him as a nurturing parent. So, the fact that I felt relief then and indifference now, seems perfectly natural to me. Also, dealing with my wife's brother's recent death [who died of an overdose in February of 1992], I'm again realizing how much contempt I feel for someone who caves in to life's difficulties and chooses to get and be "fucked up." After all my experience with the notion of chemical dependency, I don't for a moment really believe it is a disease. I believe being "fucked up" and "fucking over" one's significant others is a choice, not a disease. I believe most of us in this family, including the women who married into it, had lives as challenging and as difficult at Dad's and my brother-in-law's. But we all had the will, the mettle, to be whole and good. I'm angry at my brother-in-law because, unlike Dad, I knew him once as a regular guy with a life full of choices. Like Dad, he too chose to cave in.

Monnie's letters, July 6: Dearest Myra, it is at times like this that we regret we are so far apart. We would like to be with you in this time of sorrow. You have been constantly on our minds since we received the shocking news. If we could just put our arms around our precious daughter and hold her tight. Instead we must resort to cold pen and paper. But we want you and your dear boys to know that we share your grief. From the time we first met Roger in the early summer of 1942 we liked him and as the years rolled by we came to love him as a second son. We want you and your boys to know that we loved and admired their father. He was a most likable man with a fine sense of humor, a brilliant scholar, and one of the most capable in his chosen profession. He was always most gracious to us and never failed to make us most welcome in his home. We all deeply regret the grievous illness of the last few years but may his charm and kindness and wonderful personality so overshadow all those dark days that his memory may always be of a talented and gracious man. It is sad that one with his great skill should have so short a time to serve in a world that needs such men and that six boys should be deprived of their father and his guidance. However, the boys are most fortunate to have a wonderful and capable mother who is devoted to them. We are so thankful that Jim could be with you and we appreciate the splendid statement you made – that our best gift to you was your good brother. May God bless you both and your boys. With love from your devoted parents, Mother.

More from these same letters Myra wrote a week after Dad's death: It's taking me a long time to give you the merest sketch of that first July week. I woke about 4:00 to find my brother on the screen porch with my three bridge friends – Carolyn Zollman, Bea Bishop, and Peg Emblom. (With JoAnn, these are my nearest and dearest.) They had been here ever since after the funeral, doing what needed to be done for my family, keeping the house in order, answering the phone, putting away the food that was brought, and staying because they knew that if they were not here, someone less intimate would

be. They knew that they three were the ones most welcome to me. Their families did without them until late that evening . . . The Plunkett's had had the boys since early afternoon – putting them to work on the tennis court they were just completing. They were not home till after 9:00. So the five of us ate together, contriving somehow to make the meal a pleasant one. At 5:30 the next morning, my brother and I were up, having breakfast by 6:00 and out to the airport by 6:45. His plane left at 7:00 and I stood to watch him board – he turned at the last moment to fling up his arm and give me that big grin of his. God bless my loving brother. My return home was hard. Everyone was still asleep, of course, and I was alone for the first time. I wandered about for a while – then pulled down my Browning to read “Prospice.” Not till then had I the opportunity to indulge in a good wracking long hard cry. Above all else, you must remember that Roger loved me – in a strange fashion, desperately, consumingly, totally – but he loved me above all else. And freed now of the mysterious fears that bestrode him, he “shall but love me better after death.”

From Kip's 1966 diary, July 7: Time: 11:30. Jeff at movie with Bonnie. Mom just up to show me Dad's onyx ring. “Too big for her, so gonna save it, maybe one of us could use as wedding ring.” So many sad memories keep coming back as we go through pictures. Dad's wallet, I had to get his suitcase at express office this afternoon. Was thinking about that tape with all our voices on it, made 8 or 9 years ago. Went to work today. Played tennis at Plunkett's with Chris, Dan and Luke. Plunkett's so nice. Keep telling us come over. When I protest we're wearing out welcome, don't always receive, they say you're giving by being good company.

From a letter from Aunt Wilda, wife of Myra's brother Jimmy, written in February of 1992: From a practical viewpoint, Roger's death was fortuitous for you all. Child support stopped at age 18 and college would have been up to Myra. His death was determined accidental which meant the insurance proceeds doubled. Financially you were better off when he died before [any possible] divorce and remarriage. Jim always felt that you all lucked out as his mental problems could well have meant the end of his career as a doctor. If that had happened, child support and alimony is meaningless when an income is stopped. Jim often referred to Roger's death as “the best gift he could have given his family.”

A poem Myra wrote in 1990:

READING POEMS

Each hot day since they buried him
Three hot days ago,
She walked
In coolness
Through his house,
Lifting the loose hair from her neck
To feel its cool fall,
Lifting the sleeve of his blue serge suit

To prove its emptiness.

Now she stands,
Barefoot on his Persian rug
Eating a brown-skinned banana
Because it is the dinner hour,
Reading a book of poems
She no longer has to hide
Because he isn't coming home.

From Kip's 1966 diary, July 13: Much cooler now, rained. Insomnia til 3 last night. Thinking about Dad (how he looked when Jeff and I told him we'd been to see Dr. Martin with "rage" tapes, and about his letters to me at Pomona College, those thousands that piled up right beginning of year while Dad at Hartford.

Monnie's letters, July 20: Myra dear, we have read and reread your last letters many times. As is our custom, I generally read letters to Poppa but there were parts I could not read aloud for crying and I had to hand them to Poppa for him to read for himself. We are pleased indeed that you are sharing those hard days with us. The fact that we could not be with you depressed us, and so we appreciate your writing to us about it all. You have not mentioned Warren's arrival and so take for granted that he has not. I still feel that it will be easier for him to accept Roger's death if he knows the conditions. However, it had better come from Mark Coventry or one of the other doctors. Could you not arrange that? I do not know why I should be so deeply concerned about this, but I am. Jeff must have a very fine, thoughtful girl to step in and do so much to help the family. And we were pleased with Kip's sentimental gesture. Our love to your and the boys. Lovingly, Mother.

From Chris's 1966 diary, July 25: Luke got caught smoking and Mom made him inhale several Larks and a cigar. It serves him right. ***From Kip's 1966 diary:*** Time: 11:00. Mom just got Luke with cigs. Luke had the thing lighted and when he saw Mom he PUT IT OUT WITH HIS FINGER! Now he's got a blister there. Smoked like hell.

Myra's letters: Saturday Kip, Luke and I drove to Winona to clean off and up the boat. It took us two hours to load the car and scrub everything on the boat. It was a sad task and in a ceremonial fashion I told the boys to leave the flag in place till everything was done. We finished up, sat on the bare deck to drink a coke, and then I gave Luke the command: "Strike the flag!" – which paraphrase you will recognize and so we left her – the only boat sitting high and dry in the dock yard. We did have many happy days on board the "Lethe", Roger most of all . . . Those were difficult days to go through – July 3 through July 6 – moments of them often come back unbidden to my mind and still hurt. But time is inexorable and the human heart endures extremes only briefly. For so many years Roger had withdrawn from nearly every aspect of family life – so that, sadly, he has not left much of an empty feeling in our every day living. But, since we are the ones left, perhaps there is good to be found in this. What I am saying is that our life since he left for Newport News in June has been much the same as it ever was and we do not often find

ourselves in a painful situation where Roger's absence is acutely felt. Sad remarks to make about a father of six – but this is the fact.

Myra, July 31: Dearest Mother and Father: Four weeks have passed – and it's still July. I'll be glad to be rid of this month! . . . I am not going to tell Warren [Dad's half-brother] the truth about Roger unless he indicates to me that he knew about Roger's stay at the Institute. If Roger desired that Warren not know, I'll leave it at that. But if I discover that Warren was told that much, I will tell him the rest. The two men were never close and did not know each other well. Roger's death is no heart-ache to Warren and I do truly believe it would be better that Warren think Roger died tragically young than to know the anguish of his brother's last years. But this I will decide when Warren is here – and I've no idea when to expect him – sometime late in August, I guess.

Myra, August 14: You are quite right. “Removing signs” is a dolorous task – and repeatedly unexpected ones do sock me in the stomach: the last and unfinished roll of film in the camera, a jar of bullion on the pantry shelf that he loved to drink in the evening, or – worst of all – the unbidden thought, “I must remember to tell Roger about that.”

RJL, August 18: Your good BB started July 31 came yesterday and has been read two times now. Some comments. (1.) “The final dissolution of a good life” – this phrase is not clear, nor need it be. To me, you have had little “good” in the decade past, so I doubt that is the meaning. Perhaps you refer to the economic level, in which case, I would concur. Or better, you may be thinking of the promise which was so sadly unrealized. (2.) And indeed the “long struggle is over” and how you withstood is surely a providential matter. You clearly recognize the struggle ahead – to raise 6 boys, who must have suffered – in ways unknown to us. We share with you this deep anxiety. . . . (4.) You are probably right in respect to half-brother Warren. (5.) I appreciate fully the unhappiness (no, only you can “appreciate fully”) which comes over you at thought of what could have been. There lies tragedy of deep nature indeed – almost Grecian in nature. I find myself repeating, frequently, the lines “And yet we trust that good will fall/ At last, far off, at last to all/ And every winter change to spring.” In my older years, I prefer Tennyson.

Myra, August 29: I pass by, for later reading but not now, the letters between Roger and me and the mementoes of our early days together. There were happy indeed, but too saddening to read just now. I met him when I was nineteen years old; now at nearly forty-three, I have spent more than half my life with him. Each year hereafter is added to the nineteen and the brief twenty-two years will not change.

Myra, August 31: As reported Warren and Harriet are here but are staying in their trailer. . . . They have both had heavy Clinic schedules to keep. They have been out for long visits each afternoon, so I do not feel they are being neglected nor anything Roger may have said to them has made them too uneasy in my presence. As suspected, they know nothing of the Hartford days and I have decided that they shall not – at least from me. I may be wrong, but that is my decision. As far as they know, Roger died of pneumonia.

Monnie's letters, September 9: I suppose you are right about Warren and of course that is your concern, not mine. I have been trying to analyze my concern about it and have concluded that we are both trying to protect a loved one. You in not revealing Roger's condition (which after all was an illness and nothing to be ashamed of) and me trying to clear an untruth spread by the poor dear man. Before you were over a barrel and had to take it; now that is no longer necessary. . . . By the way, now do you want to be addressed, Mrs. C.R. or ML? I would resent being addressed any other way than Mrs. R.J. – but Poppa thinks you prefer ML.

RJL, September 25: Had hard time sleeping last night. So my mind turned to architectural thoughts. Why not plan your own row house? Get in town #1. Don't need ten acres. Boys soon all away at school and one acre is enough. Now big idea is one I yearned for, i.e., a library. Walls all books save for a big bay window giving on garden. A 'Leary' ladder [Philadelphia bookstore Grandpa liked] to get up to the books easily, a big table, and a few Windsor chairs. Size ca. 15x25, as our living room at LW. Dictionary stand. Heavy rug. And so designed that some 1,000 books from here can be added later! There you have it. Also, a semi-detached guest room where M can live when she quits living with me. No need for 4-5 bedrooms; your present inmates will soon be out on their own. There you can sit, administer big cabinet of Lepidoptera [butterfly collection], and just look look at and smell 2-3,000 books, read and write six grandchildren and now and then buy a nubbins, and dream of purchasing an incunabulum. Well, I've always wanted a library. Let's build one – and a house around it. • **Notes Myra: "I did!"**

From Chris's 1966 diary, October 2: Boy, today was a wild one. Luke and his friends were having a friendly pinecone war. Dan and I joined them, but we were a third party. They merged against us. One of them threw a couple apples at us. Suddenly it was an apple war. Dan and I had 10 guys forced in behind the barn. We had them beat. Then Tony came. Then they surrendered. But they regrouped. We had them captured in the bike shed this time.

From Chris's 1966 diary, October 12: If I had to turn my younger brothers into objects and yet maintain their personalities I would change Dan into a Bull, Collin into a sloth. Luke would be a pile of horseshit (offensive, stinky, and if you step on him, he gets you back).

RJL, October 16: Very often my mind turns to you and your life in the last four years. How I do wish that we could have been near you. But we could not, nor did we ever guess how great was your peril. You told us nothing until May of 1964. I am sure that you had what you felt were good reasons for saving us from knowing what was going on. It is past, thank God! You have the comfort of knowing that you had the courage to withstand. Perhaps I should not now refer to what happened. But the knowledge of it weighs heavy on my mind and heart. If I seldom refer to it, believe that it is because I feel that I do you no good to revive any memory of that suffering. Do please remember this. We do not forget.

From Chris's 1966 diary, November 27: Fucking Brat Luke got nailed for smoking. Jesus, that guy is always getting it. All Mom did was talk to him.

RJL, Christmas, 1966: Noon. The Messiah – such music! And above our beautiful new Magnavox is the most recent picture of you – which I continue to scrutinize and comment on. Is it my imagination which leads me to say that there is a Mona Lisa touch of a smile? Dorothy sees sadness breaking through. I'll leave it to your mother to make her own impression. I confess that I am unable to arrive at an analysis. Were your eyes directed straight at Pere as the shutter was snapped. And what do they say? Is the smile beginning or ending an emotion? I declare, this photo really puzzles and charms me.